

THE
METHODIST MAGAZINE

JANUARY 1.

ADDRESS

OF THE EDITORS OF THE METHODIST MAGAZINE, TO ITS READERS
AND FRIENDS IN THE UNITED STATES, AND ESPECIALLY TO
THE MEMBERS OF THE METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH.

IN publishing this periodical Miscellany, the Editors feel all those sensibilities which arise from a conviction that its merits are to be tested under the inspection of an enlightened community.

The care and labour inseparable from the agency of the Book Concern, forbid our devoting as much time and application to the selection and arrangement of materials for publication in the magazine, as its nature and importance demand.

But, notwithstanding these embarrassments exist, we trust the work will be found both useful and entertaining to the real friends of Zion.

The great design of this publication is to circulate religious knowledge,—a design which embraces the highest interests of rational existence, as the sum of individual and social happiness, increases on a scale of proportion with the increase of spiritual light and information.

In the execution of this design, the strictest care will be taken to guard the purity and simplicity of the doctrines of the gospel against the innovations of superstition on the one hand, and of false philosophy on the other.

In admitting controversial subjects into this work, the heat of party zeal, and personal crimination, will be cautiously avoided.

Such contentions have already done great evil in the Christian world, and especially in arming infidels against a religion,

the nature and principles of which are calculated to harmonize, improve, and sanctify the human species. Every benevolent mind—every friend of unity and peace—every heart influenced by the social affections—in short, every lover of God and man, will rejoice to see the spirit of party zeal retiring, and giving place to candour, moderation, and charity.

The few years of the present century which have already passed away, have opened the most important and auspicious events, relative to the establishment of the kingdom of Jesus Christ upon earth. The united exertions of thousands of all denominations of Christians to spread the holy scriptures—the unadulterated word of God, savours much of that catholic spirit by which the friends of christianity should always be governed, and furnishes a pleasing prospect of the extensive triumph of evangelical truth. To the accomplishment of such an object we earnestly desire this miscellany may prove an efficient auxiliary.

We are aware, that, by many readers, no periodical work will be approved, unless it is replenished with curious tales, wonderful narratives, or miraculous phenomena. With such readers we apprehend this work will meet a cool reception.—Curiosity should be indulged only within the limits of reason, and in such a way as to strengthen moral and religious principles. If the Governor of the universe recognises man as a subject of reason, it follows that faith must be grounded in evidence; and therefore we should consider it as an intrusion upon the rights of an intelligent being, to publish a narrative of any wonderful occurrence without the support of competent testimony.

It should never be forgotten that the age of miracles is past; the ends for which they were wrought by Jesus Christ and his apostles being accomplished; and that any pretended addition to them rather weakens than strengthens the evidence they afford of the truth and excellency of the christian revelation.

These observations are far from being intended to eclipse the lustre of the divine administration as displayed in the dispensations of providence and grace.

That the universe, in the whole, and in every part, is governed by infinite wisdom, power, and goodness, is a doctrine which will ever be held sacred by the friends of religion; and will never cease to be a ground of consolation and support to them in the midst of the disorders with which they are surrounded.

The grace of God manifested in the redemption of a fallen and guilty world through Jesus Christ—in the gift of the holy Spirit—in the establishment and spread of the gospel, and in the conviction, conversion, and sanctification of the souls of men, is a subject which the human mind must contemplate with mingled emotions of astonishment and joy.

But, whether this manifestation of grace is considered as an historic fact, recorded by the evangelists and apostles, or viewed in the light of the experience of thousands which comes within the circle of our own observation, we cannot but feel the force of the *evidence* with which it is attended;—*evidence* capable of application on the same principles, and in the same way that it is applied for the confirmation of other truths.

This alone is sufficient to convince us, that, in the economy of grace, man is not governed by mechanical, but by moral laws. That the government of God over all his works is perfectly analogous—That intelligent beings are recognized in the capacity of reason—that they must act as subjects of moral obligation, and be finally judged on the ground of such action.

These principles form the general outlines of a picture which the more particular delineations through this work are designed to fill up. The hand of the painter trembles at the task. The eye of the critical observer will, doubtless, discover many blemishes; but candor will be neither hasty nor rash in her decisions.

In forming the general heads under which the various materials are arranged, we have found it necessary to be as concise as possible, both in *number*, and *expression*. The number and order are as follows. 1. Divinity. 2. Biography. 3. Scripture illustrated. 4. The Attributes of God displayed in the works of Creation and Providence. 5. The grace of God manifested. 6. Miscellaneous. 7. Religious and Missionary intelligence. 8. Obituary. 9. Poetry.

It cannot be expected, where the general divisions are so limited, that there should be a critical connexion between each head, and every particular which may be placed under it: such connexion, however, will be preserved as far as the nature of the subject will admit. A treatise will not always be destined to the Miscellaneous department because it is compounded, or mixed; but its proper place will be determined by its leading character.

Before we close this address, we think it proper to caution our readers in general, and the members of the Methodist Episcopal

Church in particular, to guard against two evils. 1. Many persons, after they have read a pamphlet, lay it aside as a useless thing—It soon falls into the hands of children, or servants, where it is defaced or destroyed: or thrown promiscuously with the common news or waste papers, it is forgotten and lost in the lapse of time. Let it not be so with this Magazine. Recollect that it contains many valuable subjects, the completion of which many require several numbers, and which may, sometimes form a chain to connect volumes.

Let parents consider the Methodist Magazine as a legacy for their posterity, and as soon as the last number for the year is received, have the whole bound together and carefully preserved.

2. Without offering any violence to the rights of men, we think ourselves authorized to caution our friends against purchasing, or encouraging the publication, sale, or purchase of any book, or books, directly or indirectly under the name or title of "Methodist," unless they are published and sold in conformity to the rules of the Discipline in such cases made and provided.

As an example of this kind of imposition, we give the following fact.—A short time past, a book was put into our hands by a friend, the title page of which begins thus, "The new Methodist Pocket Hymn-Book." This heterogeneous mass had its untimely birth in a back county of this state. It is a libel upon the Methodist Episcopal Church, and a reproach to her name.

It is like counterfeit coin, which could never obtain currency by its real worth, and therefore must circulate under a forged stamp.

We have no disposition to abridge the rights which a wise and liberal constitution secures to every citizen. Real merit should be suitably appreciated and encouraged wherever it exists. But that man who does not blush at the recollection of being the author of a book which can gain credit only from a borrowed title, must have learned the art of eluding the sensibilities of conviction.

If any man, after having read the sentimental, sublime and spiritual Hymns of Mr. Wesley, and other authors from whose works our Hymn-Book is composed, can sit down and derive either edification or entertainment from the common-place poetry of the day, we are far from wishing to *lessen* his enjoyment; but the honour of the Church, whose interests we are sacredly bound to promote, calls upon us, as far as our influence

extends, to prevent the circulation of such publications under the sanction of her name.

That all persons into whose hands this work shall come may receive instruction, edification and comfort through its instrumentality, is the sincere desire, and earnest prayer of the Editors.

J. SOULE & T. MASON.

DIVINITY.

EVIDENCES OF THE TRUTH OF THE CHRISTIAN REVELATION.

Extracted from the new Edinburgh Encyclopædia.

1. It is not proposed by us in this article, to enter either into the history of the Christian religion, or into its morality and doctrines. We propose to confine ourselves to what have been called the *Evidences of Christianity*; or to exhibit a general view of those arguments, which go to prove that the New Testament is the authentic record of an actual communication from God to man.

2. Were a verbal communication to come to us from a person at a distance, there are two ways in which we might try to satisfy ourselves, that this was a true communication, and that there was no imposition in the affair. We might either sit in examination upon the substance of the message; and then from what we knew of the person from whom it professed to come, judge whether it was probable that such a message would be sent by him; or we may sit in examination upon the credibility of the messengers.

3. It is evident, that, in carrying on the first examination, we might be subject to very great uncertainty. The professed author of the communication in question may live at such a distance from us, that we may never have it in our power to verify his message by any personal conversation with him. We may be so far ignorant of his character and designs, as to be unqualified to judge of the kind of communication that should proceed from him. To estimate aright the probable authenticity of the message from what we know of its author, would require an acquaintance with his plans, and views, and circumstances, of which we may not be in possession. We may bring the

greatest degree of sagacity to this investigation; but then the highest sagacity is of no avail, when there is an insufficiency of data. Our ingenuity may be unbounded; but then we may want the materials. The principle which we may assume may be untrue in itself, and therefore might be fallacious in its application.

4. Thus, we may derive very little light from our first argument. But there is still a second in reserve,—the credibility of the messengers. We may be no judges of the kind of communication which is natural, or likely to proceed from a person with whom we are but imperfectly acquainted; but we may be very competent judges of the degree of faith that is to be reposed in the bearers of that communication. We may know and appreciate the natural signs of veracity. There is a tone and a manner characteristic of honesty, which may be both intelligible and convincing. There may be a concurrence of several messengers. There may be their substantial agreement. There may be the total want of any thing like concert or collusion among them. There may be their determined and unanimous perseverance, in spite of all the incredulity and all the opposition which they meet with. The subject of the communication may be most unpalatable to us; and we be so unreasonable, as to wreak our unpleasant feelings upon the bearers of it. In this way, they may not only have no earthly interest to deceive us, but have the strongest inducement possible to abstain from insisting upon that message which they were charged to deliver. Last of all, as the conclusive seal of their authenticity, they may all agree in giving us a watchword, which we previously knew could be given by none but their master; and which none but his messengers could ever obtain the possession of. In this way unfruitful as all our efforts may have been upon the first subject of examination, we may derive from the second the most decisive evidence, that the message in question is a real message, and was actually transmitted to us by its professed author.

5. Now, this consideration applies in all its parts to a message from God. The argument for the truth of this message resolves itself into the same two topics of examination. We may sit in judgment upon the subject of the message; or we may sit in judgment upon the credibility of its bearers.

6. The first forms a great part of that argument for the truth of the Christian religion, which comes under the head of its in-

ternut evidences. The substance of the message is neither more nor less than that particular scheme of the divine economy which is revealed to us in the New Testament ; and the point of inquiry is, whether this scheme be consistent with that knowledge of God and his attributes which we are previously in possession of.

7. It appears to us, that no effectual argument can be founded upon this consideration. We are not enough acquainted with the designs or character of the being from whom the message professes to have come. Were the author of the message some distant and unknown individual of our own species, we would scarcely be entitled to found an argument upon any comparison of ours, betwixt the import of the message and the character of the individual, even though we had our general experience of human nature to help us in the speculation. Now, of the invisible God, we have no experience whatever. We are still further removed from all direct and personal observation of him or of his counsels. Whether we think of the eternity of his government, or the mighty range of its influence over the wide departments of nature and of providence, he stands at such a distance from us, as to make the management of his empire a subject inaccessible to all our faculties,

8. It is evident, however, that this does not apply to the second topic of examination. The bearers of the message were beings like ourselves ; and we can apply our safe and certain experience of man to their conduct and their testimony. We know too little of God, to found any argument upon the coincidence which we conceive to exist betwixt the subject of the message and our previous conceptions of its author. But we may know enough of man to pronounce upon the credibility of the messengers. Had they the manner and physiognomy of honest men ? Was their testimony resisted, and did they persevere in it ? Had they any interest in fabricating the message ; or did they suffer in consequence of this perseverance ? Did they suffer to such a degree as to constitute a satisfying pledge of their integrity ? Was there more than one messenger, and did they agree as to the substance of that communication which they made to the world ? Did they exhibit any special mark of their office as the messengers of God ; such a mark as none but God could give, and none but his approved messengers could obtain the possession of ? Was this mark the power of working miracles ; and were these miracles so obviously addressed to the senses, as to leave no suspi-

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cion of deceit behind them? These are questions which we feel our competency to take up, and to decide upon. They lie within the legitimate boundaries of human observation; and upon the solution of these do we rest the question of the truth of the Christian religion.

9. This, then, is the state of the question with those to whom the message was originally addressed. They had personal access to the messengers; and the evidences of their veracity lay before them. They were the eye and ear-witnesses of those facts, which occurred at the commencement of the Christian religion, and upon which its credibility rests. What met their observation must have been enough to satisfy them; but we live at the distance of nearly two thousand years, and is there enough to satisfy us? Those facts, which constitute the evidence for Christianity, might have been credible and convincing to them, if they really saw them; but is there any way by which they can be rendered credible and convincing to us, who only read of them? What is the expedient by which the knowledge and belief of the men of other times can be transmitted to posterity? Can we distinguish between a corrupt and a faithful transmission? Have we evidence before us, by which we can ascertain what was the belief of those to whom the message was first communicated? And can the belief which existed in their minds be derived to ours, by our sitting in judgment upon the reasons which produced it?

10. The surest way in which the belief and knowledge of the men of former ages can be transmitted to their descendants, is through the medium of written testimony; and it is fortunate for us, that the records of the Christian religion are not the only historical documents which have come down to us. A great variety of information has come down to us in this way; and a great part of that information is as firmly believed, and as confidently proceeded upon, as if the thing narrated had happened within the limits of our eye-sight. No man doubts the invasion of Britain by Julius Cæsar; and no man doubts, therefore, that a conviction of the truth of past events may be fairly produced in the mind by the instrumentality of a written memorial. This is the kind of evidence which is chiefly appealed to for the truth of ancient history; and it is counted satisfying evidence for all that part of it which is received and depended upon.

(To be continued.)

BIOGRAPHY.

MEMOIR OF MR. GEORGE SHADFORD.

MR. GEORGE SHADFORD, the subject of this Memoir, was born at a place called *Scotter*, near *Kirton*, in *Lindsey, Lincolnshire*, January 19, 1739. When no more than about eight or nine years of age, the fear of death, and the consideration of the future misery of those who die in their sins, distressed him exceedingly. But as he grew up, to use his own words, he "was very prone to speak bad words, and often to perform wicked actions." Being of an active and restless disposition, he sought for happiness in the use of a variety of sports and diversions, some of which were of a cruel nature. On every Lord's-day, in the forenoon, his father took him to church, and after their return home obliged him and his sister to read a chapter or two of the Scriptures, and then charged him not to play in the afternoon; but, notwithstanding the positive injunction of his father, he took the first opportunity that presented itself to steal away to his sports, nor was it unusual for him, on such occasions, to stay from home till evening, when, he says, his father called him to an account.

From the occasional hints, relative to his parents, which are found in Mr. Shadford's account of himself, it may be concluded that they feared God, and wrought righteousness. They insisted on his praying every morning and evening at least; sent him every Sunday to be catechized by the minister; and when he was fourteen, sent him to the bishop to be confirmed. When he was sixteen years of age, they gave him a charge to prepare for receiving the sacrament of the Lord's supper. For about a month before he partook of this sacred ordinance, he retired from all vain and trifling company, and prayed and read much alone; whilst the Spirit of God applied to his heart the Divine truths which he read. He wept much in secret, was ashamed of his past life, and hoped that he would never again profane the day of the Lord. When he approached the table of the Lord, it appeared so awful to him, that he could scarcely stand; and affected him in some measure, as if he had been going to the judgment-seat of Christ. His heart, upon this solemn occasion, was softened; and the impressions then made upon his mind continued to operate for about three months. He broke off from all his companions, and retired to read on the Lord's day; some-

times into his chamber, at other times, into the fields ; but very frequently into the church-yard, near which his father lived. Occasionally, he spent no less than two or three hours amongst the graves, sometimes reading and sometimes praying. Nor was he, at those seasons, altogether destitute of Divine comfort : and it is highly probable, that had he then been favoured with the advantage of Christian fellowship, he would have retained the Divine impressions made upon his mind, and proceeded steadily in the way of holiness. But alas ! he had not a single companion that feared God ; and hence, having none to direct him, and being ignorant of Satan's devices, he yielded gradually to one temptation after another, until he lost the form of godliness, as well as the degree of the power of it, which he had for a time possessed. Thus shorn of his strength, he was easily prevailed upon by two young men, with whom he became intimate to read such books, and converse upon such subjects, as had a powerful tendency to vitiate his mind. His relish for profane books was, of course, followed by a dislike to those of a religious description ; and his propensity to sin increased more than ever. In wrestling, running, leaping, foot-ball, dancing, and such like sports, he not only delighted, but gloried. At the age of twenty he was so active that he seemed a compound of life and fire, and had such a flow of animal spirits, that he was never in his element unless when employed in such sports.

About this time four persons were balloted to serve in the militia, at the town of his nativity ; and he engaged, for a trifling sum, to become a substitute for one of them. His parents, on being made acquainted with the rash step he had taken, were almost distracted with grief. The distress which they manifested gave him much uneasiness, and, at their desire, he attempted, but when it was too late, to break the engagement into which he had entered.

At the end of the year, the company was called off to Manchester, where they lay most of the winter. While in that place, Mr. Shadford was afflicted with a fever, during the progress of which he was horribly afraid of death ; but soon after his recovery his convictions wore off. One night, when he was going to bed, he heard the drums beat to arms ! He soon learned that an express had arrived for the company to which he belonged to march immediately to Liverpool ; and that Thurot had landed at Carrickfergus, in Ireland. The company immediately

assembled, they marched all night, and arrived at Warrington about break of day, and at Liverpool the next evening. It does not, however, appear that the company embarked for Ireland; Thurot's putting into Carrickfergus having been found to be a matter of no serious consequence.

Misery being inseparable from sin, Mr. Shadford found, from experience, that "the way of transgressors is hard." One day, being exceedingly provoked by one of his comrades, he twice swore by the name of God; a crime of which he had not formerly been guilty. "Immediately," saith he, "I was, as it were, stabbed to the heart by a sword. I was sensible I had grievously sinned against God. I believe I never swore another oath afterwards."

About this time he was often tempted to put an end to his wretched, mortal life. So powerfully did this temptation operate, that he was afraid to stand near a deep river, lest he should throw himself into it. When on the edge of a rock, he trembled, and fearing lest he should cast himself down, was obliged to retreat suddenly. When on the front of a gallery, at church, he many times drew backward, from an apprehension that otherwise he should cast himself down headlong. It seemed as if Satan was permitted to wreak his malice upon him in an uncommon manner; but he was wonderfully preserved amidst such dreadful temptations. At other times, when at prayer, or walking alone meditating, God graciously visited him with the drawings of his Spirit.

Amidst all Mr. Shadford's wanderings from God, he still retained a strong affection for his parents; and hence, learning that his father was in distressing circumstances, he gave him all the money he had received in order to go into the militia. Very frequently, during his absence from home, when he heard the minister read in the church, "Honour thy father and thy mother," &c. with tears in his eyes, he said, "Lord incline my heart to keep this law:" always believing that a curse would attend undutiful children.

When the company to which he belonged lay in Gainsborough, he went with a sergeant to the place where the Methodists frequently preached. Their intention in going there was not to receive profit to their souls, but to meet two young women, in order to walk with them in the afternoon. When they came to the place, they found the persons whom they wished to meet;

but shortly after the preacher began, Mr. Shadford forgot those dissipated characters. "I was struck," saith he, "with his (the preacher's) manner. He took out a hymn-book, and the people sung a hymn. After this, he began to pray extempore, in such a manner as I had never heard. I thought it a most excellent prayer. After this, he took his little Bible out of his pocket, read over his text, and put it into his pocket again. I marvelled at this, and thought within myself, 'will he *preach* without a book too?'"

The preacher spoke much against drunkenness, swearing, &c. but Mr. S. thought he had not been guilty of such sins. At last he spoke very close against pleasure-takers, and proved that such are dead while they live. "I thought," saith Mr. S. "if what he says be true, I am in a dreadful condition. I thought again, this must be true, for he proves it from the word of God. Immediately I found a kind of judgment-seat set up in my conscience, where I was tried, cast, and condemned; for I knew I had been seeking happiness in the pleasures of the world, and in the creature all my days; not in the Creator and Redeemer of my soul, the only central point of bliss. I revolved over and over what I had heard, as I went from preaching: and resolved, 'If this be Methodist preaching, I will come again;' for I received more light from that single sermon than from all that ever I had heard in my life before."

(To be continued.)

SCRIPTURE ILLUSTRATED.

EXTRACT FROM GISBURNE'S SERMON ON RELIGIOUS DESPONDENCY.

SOMETIMES the despondence fortified by the suspension of religious comfort, is darkened by the gloom of erroneous doctrine. The wretched individual begins to apprehend that he is predestinated to wrath and anguish everlasting: that, if not expressly created for the purpose of being rendered miserable, at least he is "passed over" in the dispensation of redeeming mercy: that he is virtually reprobated, being designedly excluded by the sovereign will of God from the number of those whom the Almighty is supposed specially to have elected to be the sole par-

takers of his converting grace. To alleviate alarms excited by misrepresentations of the revealed counsel of the Most High, may be an object sometimes attainable by that ingenuity of inconsistent explanation, which, even while under the pressure of difficulties, it is constrained to prune the exterior branches of an unsubstantial system, labours to guard the trunk from attack.— To subdue them, the axe must be laid to the root: the false doctrine must be manifested to be false. To the fervent piety and the practical holiness of numbers of our Christian brethren, who conceive themselves to read in the word of God the tenets in question, my testimony, however unimportant, I rejoice to bear. But compelled, as I have repeatedly been, to know the terrors which those tenets have produced, it seems an act of duty, in addressing persons exposed to similar terrors, not to withhold my deliberate conviction, that the tenets are destitute of scriptural support: and that the detached passages of Holy Writ whence they are deduced, fairly admit, when considered in themselves, and clearly demand, when taken in conjunction with the rest of Scripture, a very different interpretation. For the present purpose, it may be sufficient to refer the desponding sufferer to some plain passages of the Divine Word, which teach that salvation, in every respect unattainable but through our Lord Jesus Christ, is through him open to every man: and that on every man of rational faculties, the free mercy of God bestows, for the sake of the great Redeemer, a portion of antecedent grace so far influencing the will, the understanding, and the heart, as, without intrenching on moral agency, to enable him, if diligent in the application of grace received, to obtain through the blood of the cross an inheritance among the saints. “Have I any pleasure that the wicked should die? saith the Lord God. As I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way, and live. Turn ye, turn ye, why will ye die?” Can we frame to the imagination any sense, in which these words could be uttered without delusion, if there were *any* person not actually enabled by divine grace, in will no less than in every other requisite faculty, to turn unto God? *The Lord is not willing that any should perish; but that all should come to repentance. God our Saviour will have all men to be saved. Jesus tasted death for every man: gave himself a ransom for all; is the propitiation for the sins of the*

whole world. Could any one of these declarations have been made, if there had been a *single* individual actually or virtually “passed over,” in the plan of redemption; unconditionally excluded from the possibility of obtaining salvation through Jesus Christ; unblessed with that preventing influence on his will, without which he must remain incapable of profiting by the Redeemer’s death; tantalized by offers of mercy, with which he is left morally incompetent to close? Would our Lord have commanded his disciples to “preach the gospel to every creature,” if there had been a single person to whom it must necessarily have been preached in vain? And must it not necessarily have been preached in vain to the man, had such there been, whom God had not freed by the antecedent operation of his grace upon the will, from all impossibility of believing? Is it possible that redemption can be general, if election renders it necessarily partial? Is it true that all men may be saved, if God bestows only on certain select individuals the preventing grace without which no man can be saved? Is it not trifling to affirm that all may be saved “if they will;” while without the preventing grace of God, said to be bestowed on the elect, no man can “will?”—Are these conclusions to be evaded by a verbal distinction; by replying that it is not a “natural” but a “moral” impossibility which precludes those who are not of the number of the elect from salvation? As though an impossibility would be the less an impossibility, if it should arise from a moral cause! As though the most essential parts of a man’s nature were not the moral constitution which he brings into the world! I forbear to accumulate scriptural passages similar in import to those which have been produced. The views which God has disclosed of his own attributes, and the universal tenor of his word, are altogether at variance with the opinions which it has been here requisite to withstand. Fear not, ye mourners. Every man may become one of God’s elect. Go forth and prosper. The way of salvation, unbarred to the whole world, lies before you. Enter it, pursue it, in the strength of your God.

THE ATTRIBUTES OF GOD DISPLAYED.

CONTEMPLATION OF THE STARRY HEAVENS.

Extracted from Sturm's Reflections.

THE sky at night presents us a sight of wonders, which must raise the astonishment of every attentive observer of nature.—But from whence comes it, that so few consider the firmament with attention? I am willing to believe, that in general it proceeds from ignorance: for it is impossible to be convinced of the greatness of the works of God, without feeling a rapture almost heavenly. O how I wish to make you share this divine pleasure!—Raise your thoughts for this purpose towards the sky. It will be enough to name to you the immense bodies which are strewed in that space, to fill you with astonishment at the greatness of the artificer. It is in the centre of our system that the throne of the sun is established. That body is more than a million of times larger than the earth. It is one hundred millions of miles distant from it, and notwithstanding this prodigious distance, it has a most sensible effect upon our sphere.—Round the sun move nineteen globular bodies, seven of which are called planets, the other twelve, moons or satellites: they are opaque, and receive from the sun, light, heat, and perhaps also their interior motion. Georgium Sidus, Saturn, Jupiter, Mars, the Earth, Venus, and Mercury, are the names of the seven principal planets. Of these seven, Mercury is nearest the sun; and for that reason is mostly invisible to the astronomer. As he is near nineteen times smaller than our earth, he contributes but little to adorn the sky. Venus follows him, and is sometimes called the morning, and sometimes the evening star. It is one of the brightest of the heavenly bodies, whether it precedes, the sun-rise, or succeeds the sitting sun. It is near as large again as our earth, and is about sixty-eight millions of miles distant from the sun. After Venus comes our earth, round which the moon moves as a secondary planet. Mars, which is the fourth planet, is seven times smaller than our globe; and its distance from the sun, is one hundred and forty-four millions of miles. Jupiter, with his belt, is always distinguished by his splendour in the starry sky; It seems in size to surpass all the fixed stars; it is almost as bright as Venus in all her glory, ex-

cept that the light of it is less brilliant than the morning star.—How small is our earth in comparison with Jupiter! there would be no less than eight thousand globes like ours necessary to form one equal in size to that of Jupiter. Saturn, whose distance from the sun is upwards of nine hundred millions of miles, was thought the remotest planet, until the late discovery of the Georgium Sidus, whose distance is eighteen thousand millions of miles, and its magnitude eighty-nine times greater than our earth. In the mean time, the sun, with all the planets which accompany it, is but a very small part of the immense fabric of the universe. Each star, which from hence appears to us no larger than a brilliant set in a ring, is in reality an immense body, which equals the sun both in size and splendour. Each star, then, is not only a world, but also the centre of a planetary system. It is in this light we must consider the stars, which shine over our heads in a winter night. They are distinguished from the planets by their brilliancy, and because they never change their place in the sky. According to their apparent size, they are divided into six classes, which comprehend altogether about three thousand stars. But though they have endeavoured to fix the exact number of them, it is certain they are innumerable.—The very number of stars sowed here and there, and which the most piercing eye can with difficulty perceive, prove that it would be in vain to attempt to reckon them. Telescopes, indeed, have opened to us new points in the creation, since, by their assistance, millions of stars are discovered. But it would be a very senseless pride in man, to try to fix the limits of the universe by those of his telescope.

If we reflect on the distance between the fixed stars and our earth, we shall have new cause to admire the greatness of the creation. Our senses alone make us already know that the stars must be farther from us than the planets. Their apparent littleness only proceeds from their distance from the earth.—And, in reality, this distance cannot be measured; since a cannon-ball, supposing it always to preserve the same degree of swiftness, would scarce, at the end of six hundred thousand years, reach the star nearest to our earth. What then must the stars be? Their prodigious distance and their brightness tell us,—they are suns which reflect as far as to us, not a borrowed light, but their own light; suns which the Creator has

sown by millions in the immeasurable space : and each of which is accompanied by several terrestrial globes, which it is designed to illuminate.

In the mean time, all these observations, however surprising they are, lead us, at the utmost, but to the first limits of the creation. If we could transport ourselves above the moon ; if we could reach the highest star over our heads, we should discover new skies, new suns, new stars, new systems of worlds, and perhaps still more magnificent. Even there, however, the dominions of our great Creator would not end ; and we should find, with the greatest surprise, that we had only arrived at the frontiers of the worldly space. But the little we do know of his works, is sufficient to make us admire the infinite wisdom, power and goodness of our adorable Creator. Let us stop here, then, and reflect how great must be that being who has created these immense globes ! who has regulated their course, and whose mighty hand directs and supports them ! And what is the clod of earth we inhabit, with the magnificent scene it presents us, in comparison of the beauty of the firmament ? If this earth were annihilated, its absence would be no more observed than that of a grain of sand from the sea shore. What are provinces and kingdoms in comparison of those worlds ? Nothing but atoms which play in the air, and are seen in the sun beams. And what am I, when I reckon myself among this infinite number of God's creatures ? How am I lost in my own nothingness ! But however little I appear in this, how great do I find myself in other respects !—"How beautiful this starry firmament which God has chosen for his throne ! What is more admirable than the celestial bodies ! Their splendour dazzles me ; their beauty enchants me. However, all beautiful as it is, and richly adorned, yet is this sky void of intelligence. It knows not its own beauty ; while I, mere clay, whom God has moulded with his hands, am endowed with sense and reason." I can contemplate the beauty of these shining orbs : Still more, I am already, to a certain degree, acquainted with their sublime Author ; and I partly see some rays of his glory. I will endeavour to be more and more acquainted with his works, and make it my employment, till, by a glorious change, I rise above the starry regions.

THE CARE WHICH PROVIDENCE TAKES OF ANIMALS DURING THE WINTER SEASON.

MILLIONS of rational beings, dispersed in the different countries of the world, are provided at this season with all the necessities of life. The greater the number of them is, the greater variety of wants they have, according to their condition, their age, their manner of living. The less we are able to form a plan, and take secure measures for our own preservation, the more the arrangements, so full of wisdom and goodness, made by our Creator, to provide for it, deserve our attention and admiration. But there would be a sort of selfishness in confining the divine goodness and wisdom to the preservation of mankind alone, without remembering the care that Providence also takes of animals during winter. A care which he extends to creatures much greater in number on the earth, than the rational beings who inhabit it.

However wonderful the preservation of human creatures may be, we can say, with truth, that the cares of Providence towards animals are still more astonishing proofs of the wisdom, power, and goodness of God.

That the prodigious number of animals which our globe contains, should find food or habitation in summer, is not surprising, because all nature then is disposed to concur towards that end.—But that, in this season, the same number of creatures, those millions of quadrupeds, of reptiles, of birds, of insects, and fishes, should continue to exist, is a circumstance which must excite the astonishment of every one capable of reflection. Nature has provided most animals with a covering, by means of which they can bear the cold, and procure themselves food in winter, as well as in summer. The bodies of wild beasts which inhabit forests and deserts are so formed, that the hair falls off in summer, and grows again in winter, till it becomes a fur which enables the animal to endure the most severe cold. Other kinds of animals find an assylum under the bark of trees, in old crevices, in hollows of rocks and caves, when the cold obliges them to quit their summer dwelling.

It is there, that some carry before-hand the food which is to serve them, and thus live on what they have gathered in the summer; others pass the winter in profound sleep. Nature has given to several sorts of birds an instinct, which prompts them to

change place at the approach of winter. They are seen flying in great numbers into warmer climates. Several animals, who are not designed to travel, find, notwithstanding, their wants supplied in this season. Birds know how to find out insects in moss, and in the crevices of the bark of trees. Several kinds of quadrupeds carry provision in the summer-time into caves and feed on it in winter. Others are obliged to seek their subsistence under the snow and ice. Several sorts of insects in winter, confined to marshes and frozen rivers, are deprived of food for that time, and still preserve life. Perhaps also, many means made use of by Providence for the preservation of animals, are yet concealed from us.

Adore, with me, our almighty and gracious Preserver, whose goodness and majesty do not make him disdain attention to the weakest creature existing under the heavens.

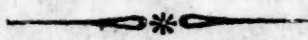
From the elephant to the mite, all animals owe to him their dwelling, their food, and their life; and, even where nature herself seems barren of resources, he finds means to make amends for her poverty.

Let this consideration strengthen our confidence in God.—How can anxiety, care, or anguish, get access into our hearts, or make us despair of being preserved during the winter? That God, who provides for the animals, will not forsake mankind. He who shews himself so great in smaller objects, will be still greater in the more important.

The God who provides a covering for animals will be able to clothe us. The God who points out to them a retreat in the caves of the mountains, will find for us an assylum to pass our days in quietness. The God who has prepared for them, even under the snow and ice, their proper food, will be able to provide for us in the most critical seasons.

In fine, let these reflections lead us to imitate, as much as our faculties will permit, the generous cares of divine Providence, in contributing to the preservation and happiness of our fellow creatures, and even to the welfare of every living animal.—To be cruel towards animals, to refuse them food, and indispensable conveniencies, is to act manifestly contrary to the will of our common Creator, whose beneficent cares extend even to those beings which are inferior to us. And, if animals have a real right to our attention, how much more are

we obliged to soften, as well as we can, the evils of our fellow-creatures? Let it not be sufficient for us to supply our own wants, but let us endeavour to supply those of others; and never suffer any one to sink under misery, whom it was in our power to relieve.



THE GRACE OF GOD MANIFESTED.



SHORT MEMOIR OF MRS. HANNAH HOWE, WRITTEN BY HER HUSBAND.

To the Editors of the Methodist Magazine.

Dear Brethren,

AGREEABLY to the request of Conference I shall attempt to give you a short, though it may be somewhat imperfect account of the Experience and Death of my beloved wife, who departed this life October 11th, 1812, in the thirtieth year of her age.—She was born of reputable parents, who at that time (1783) lived in the town of Adams, in the state of Massachusetts. Nothing very remarkable occurred from her infancy, until she was about sixteen or seventeen years of age, when it pleased God to revive his work in the town of Brandon, in the state of Vermont, where she then resided with her uncle. It pleased the Lord to make use of the Methodist preachers in this gracious work, as the instruments to bring many from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God, of which happy number she was one. After labouring for some weeks under the burden of her sins, it pleased the Lord to speak peace to her soul, through the instrumentality of brother S. D. while holding forth the ingrafted word of life, which is able to save the soul, at the house of her father, who had removed to Orwell, in the state of Vermont, who, soon after, together with his wife, and the subject of these memoirs, joined society. She passed through much opposition, and persecution from a gainsaying world; notwithstanding she held fast her profession, overcame with love, and witnessed a good confession before many witnesses. I became acquainted with her in August, 1805, and married her in February, 1806. From that time, I may truly say, the Lord gave me a helpmate,

and one that laboured night and day for the strengthening of my hands in the work to which God had called me.

On account of a bad state of health, I had some severe trials relative to a location; but notwithstanding all the inconveniences of an unsettled state, and having to remove from circuit to circuit, she would persuade me to try it one year longer, and was often heard to say that she hoped that she should never be the cause of hindering me from travelling, and preaching the gospel of our common Lord. In 1806 she was with me on Brandon circuit—1807 on Schenectady—1808 on Albany—in 1809 Montgomery—1810 on Cambridge, at all of which places I trust there are many which bless the Lord that they became acquainted with her. She was plain and open in her manners, close and cutting in reproofs, sympathetic and feeling in her advice and counsel; naturally high spirited, yet, with truth it may be said, not revengeful; but, on all occasions, manifested a forgiving disposition, and was often known to weep and mourn that she was not more watchful over the risings of her temper, fearing most of all lest she should wound the precious cause she had embraced. She was humane to her fellow creatures in distress, weeping over the sick, administering cordials to the wounded in spirit, and food and raiment to the poor and indigent whether professor or non-professor, and often invited the poor to her house, in order (as far as she could in her circumstances) to relieve their wants. She stood at the greatest distance from hypocrisy, openly telling the worst of her case in class-meeting, and love-feast; but in her lowest times declared that she would rather die than give up the cause of Christ. In 1811 we received our appointment for Brandon circuit, and removed to her father's house on that circuit, where we were called to drink deep of the cup of affliction by sickness and death. In May 1812 it pleased the Lord to call from time one of our children, which was a grief to her, and had a very sensible effect upon her health, which had for sometime been upon the decline. Her complaints (which proved to be the consumption) became more alarming and her dissolution drew near.

She was much engaged with God in prayer for resignation to his will, and often expressed a wish that she might die shouting, and have an easy passage over the Jordan of death; and, blessed be the Lord, he remarkably answered her prayers in this respect. For some weeks before her death she gave up the world,

and conversed about death with the greatest composure of mind, often exclaiming "how good the Lord is, time is too precious to sleep away." At another time, while rejoicing in the Lord, she cried out, "come ye blessed, *come*. O will it ever be said to me come ye blessed!" She disposed of her effects with the greatest composure, and requested me "to bring up Maria for God," and to "let her wear no superfluities," and said, "I hope we may all meet in heaven where parting can never come." I observed to her that it was a great thing to change worlds, and that God was a consuming fire, and justice knew no forgiveness, and that we were all sinners by nature; "yes," said she, "but there is mercy in Christ." She then said to me, "do you doubt of my being prepared to die?" I replied, no; but I thought we ought to examine close to see how it stood between God and us. "O," said she, "I should not wonder if you should doubt of my state, when I have lived so unfaithful. Can you forgive me all I have said or done wrong to you? I hope if I should live I shall be more faithful to God." I told her she had not done any thing to me that needed my forgiveness. I said to her "we have a good and gracious Redeemer to go to. She expressed the fullest confidence in him, and said Jesus was precious to her soul. About this time, being much worn down with watching, I fell a sleep, but was soon awaked by the sound of her fervent prayer and praise. Her language was the most feeling, and enough to move the hardest heart. She rejoiced in God her Saviour, and shouted aloud for joy; and witnessed that the Lord was good to her amidst all her afflictions.

October 1st. she spoke of having had great trials. "It seemed," said she, "as though Satan was here;" (alluding to some disagreeable company that had visited her the night before) "but now I feel that God is here, and my soul is happy in him." To one of her sisters who sat up with her that night, she gave the experience of Hester Ann Rogers as a pledge of remembrance, and spake much of her excellent character. As I was about to lie down, she called me to her, and, taking me by the hand, commended me to God, wishing me a good night's rest.—She slept but little that night, frequently waking and speaking of the goodness of God. October 2nd. she continued to grow weaker in body, and requested Cloe Smead, her nurse, to sleep with her. "O what union there is," said she, "between Christians, O, it seems as though it was heaven here, the more of

Christians the more of God," and spake much of the blessedness of Christian company and conversation. She often said, through the course of the night, "we ought to go to sleep;" but would again break out in prayer and praise and say, "how good the Lord is to my soul, time is too precious to sleep. October 3d. she conversed much of the goodness of God, and said to a woman that came in, "I often thought when I came so near death, it would appear gloomy, and awful, but, Glory be to God, it appears pleasant." Shortly after she had a fit of the palsy, so that she could not converse much; we thought she was dying,—I took her by the hand, and said you will shortly be in Glory—"yes," said she, with joy sparkling in her countenance, "and see my child and Jesus." She was often enquired of whether Jesus was precious, and at all times gave us to understand by signs that he was. October 7th. we were conversing of the happy death of a certain person—I looked round and she was waving her hand with a smiling countenance. I asked if she felt as though she could shout, "yes," said she, and still waving her hand, cried "Glory! Glory! Glory!"

October 11th. But oh! the day of her departure came, in which we saw her sinking into the arms of death. However, for the most part of the time, through the course of the day she appeared to be regular, and her mind clear and serene. A few hours before the soul took its flight, she lay as though lost to all things here below; but appeared to be conversing with invisible guests, and was distinctly heard to say "Glory! Glory! Angels, Angels, Jesus loves me." Shortly after I said to her "my dear, we have gone as far with you as we can, and must now give you up to Jesus. Roll all your burdens on him. He hath suffered more for you than you can suffer. He sympathises with you.—I hope I shall so live as to meet you in Glory." "Yes," said she, putting one hand on my head, and the other on my bosom, with looks the most pleasant, mixed with compassion for her friends. A short time before she breathed her last, I took her by the hand and asked her, if her confidence held out? if Jesus was precious? and if she had a prospect of heaven? she pressed my hand, and said, "yes," and fell a sleep in the arms of Jesus without a struggle or a groan.

MISCELLANEOUS.

LETTER FROM GENERAL WASHINGTON TO THE REVEREND THOMAS COKE, AND REV. FRANCIS ASBURY, BISHOPS OF THE METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH, IN ANSWER TO AN ADDRESS FROM THOSE GENTLEMEN, IN BEHALF OF THE METHODISTS IN THE UNITED STATES.

"Gentlemen,

"I return to you individually, and through you to your society collectively in the United States, my thanks for the demonstrations of affection, and the expressions of joy offered in their behalf, on my late appointment. It shall be my endeavour to manifest the purity of my inclinations for promoting the happiness of mankind, as well as the sincerity of my desires to contribute whatever may be in my power towards the civil and religious liberties of the American people. In pursuing this line of conduct, I hope, by the assistance of Divine Providence, not altogether to disappoint the confidence which you have been pleased to repose in me.

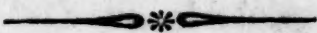
"It always affords me satisfaction, when I find a concurrence in sentiment and practice between all conscientious men, in acknowledgements of homage to the great Governor of the universe, and in professions of support to a just, civil government. After mentioning that I trust the people of every denomination, who demean themselves as good citizens, will have occasion to be convinced that I shall always strive to prove a faithful and impartial patron of genuine vital religion: I must assure you in particular, that I take in the kindest part the promise you make of presenting your prayers at the throne of grace for me, and that I likewise implore the Divine benediction on yourselves, and your religious community.

"G. WASHINGTON."

PRINCE EUGENE'S PRAYER.

I BELIEVE in thee, O my God! Do thou strengthen my faith. I hope in thee, confirm my hopes: I love thee, inflame my love more and more. I repent of all my sins, but do thou increase my repentance. As my first beginning I worship thee; as my last end I long for thee; as my eternal benefactor I praise thee; and as my supreme protector I pray unto thee; that it may please thee, O Lord, to guide and lead me by thy providence, to keep me

in obedience by thy justice, to comfort me by thy mercy, and to protect me by thy almighty power. I submit unto thee all my thoughts, words, and deeds, as well as my afflictions, pains, and sufferings; and I desire to have them always in my mind, to do all my works in thy name, and for thy sake to bear all adversity with patience. I will nothing but what thou wilt, O God; because it is agreeable unto thee. O give me grace that I may be attentive in my prayer, temperate in my diet, vigilant in my conduct, and unmoveable in all good purposes. Grant, O most merciful Lord, that I may be true and faithful to those who have entrusted me with their secrets; that I may be courteous to all men; and that both in my words and actions, I may shew unto them a good example. Dispose my heart to admire and praise thy goodness, to hate all errors and evil works, to love my neighbour, and despise the world. Assist me, good God, in subduing lust by mortification, covetousness by liberality, anger by mildness, and lukewarmness by zeal and fervency. Enable me to conduct myself with prudence in all transactions, and to shew courage in danger, patience in adversity, and in prosperity an humble mind. Let thy grace illuminate my understanding, direct my will, sanctify my body, and bless my soul. Make me diligent in curbing all irregular affections, zealous in imploring thy grace, careful in keeping thy commandments, and constant in working out my own salvation. Finally, O God, make me sensible how little is the world, how great thy heavens, how short time, and how long will be the blessed eternity. O that I may well prepare myself for death! that I may dread thy judgments, that I may avoid the torments of hell, and obtain of thee, O God, eternal life, through the merits of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.



RELIGIOUS AND MISSIONARY INTELLIGENCE.



LETTER FROM THE REV. EBENEZER HENDERSON, TO THE COMMITTEE OF THE BRITISH AND FOREIGN BIBLE SOCIETY.

Bible Society's House, St. Petersburg, June 8, 1817,

"YESTERDAY was celebrated the *Fourth* Anniversary of the Russian Bible Society. Notwithstanding the unfavourable state of the weather, and the inconvenient situation of the Taurin Pal-

ace, (in one of the magnificent halls of which the Meeting was held,) it was computed to have been nearly three times more numerously attended than it was last year. The hall and adjoining room were quite crowded, and presented to the view of the Christian philanthropist a scene of the most interesting and animating nature. Many of the most distinguished personages, both in church and state, honoured the meeting with their presence.— I was peculiarly struck with the sight of a group of graduated monks and professors from the Newsky monastery, and of a number of military officers, high in rank, who appeared in another direction. Representatives of most of the nations for whom we are preparing editions of the Sacred Scriptures; such as, Russians, Armenians, Georgians, Greeks, Moldavians, Finns, Poles, Esthonians, Livonians, Germans, and French, were assembled to take part in the ceremony, and listen to the interesting details of the publication of the word of God in their respective languages. Among others, I observed two learned Russians, who have spent fifteen years at the Academy in Pekin, and are masters of the Chinese and Mandshur languages. The scene naturally led my mind to that beautiful passage in the Prophet Isaiah: ‘Lift up thine eyes round about, and behold: all these gather themselves together, and come to thee. Behold, these come from far; and lo, these from the North, and the West: and these from the land of Sinim!’ May we not confidently cherish the hope, that, by the blessing of God on the progressive efforts of Bible and Missionary Societies, Zion will, ere long, see this prophecy fully accomplished? Already have we beheld a little one become a thousand, and a small one a strong nation: yea, and we may add: ‘The Lord hath hastened it in his time.’

At half past eleven o'clock, our Noble President took the Chair, supported, on the right, by the Archbishops, Michael and Seraphim, and the Minister of the Interior, and, on the left, by the Roman Catholic Metropolitan Sestrenseвич Bogush. The Prince opened the business of the day in a truly excellent and appropriate speech of considerable length; after which, His Excellency, Mr. Papoff, came forward, and read the report, which was listened to with the most profound silence by the numerous assembly. I know that you have perused the former Reports of the Russian Bible Society with the deepest interest; and, I have had an opportunity of remarking with what eagerness they

have been read in different countries of Europe ; but I will venture to predict, that when this document is published all will allow that it far surpasses any of the preceding, in the richness of its matter, the magnitude and importance of the subjects it develops, and the genuine spirit of Christianity which it breathes throughout. It concludes with a solemn prayer, which made a powerful impression on the auditory, and called forth overflowing ejaculations to the author of every good and perfect gift, for the continuance of his blessing on the institution. It is absolutely impossible for me to describe to you the sensation which pervaded the whole assembly, on the conclusion of this most interesting record. Their attention, which had been irresistibly arrested for upwards of an hour, was now relieved, and gave way to expressions of the most laudable enthusiasm in the best of causes. Each turned to his neighbour with smiles of joy and marks of admiration ; and, from one end of the hall to the other, but one sentiment seemed to be uttered : " What hath God wrought ! "

You will recollect the very important Resolution passed at the Second Meeting of the Committee of the Russian Bible Society, purporting, that they should not consider themselves to have attained the object of their institution, till they had provided with a Bible, every family, and, if possible, every individual in the Russian empire. With what ardour they are pushing forward to the attainment of this object and accelerating the complete redemption of their pledge, will be seen, when it is stated, that, from the establishment of the Society to the present time, its Committee have either published, or are engaged in publishing, no fewer than *forty-three* editions of the sacred Scriptures, in *seventeen* different languages, forming a grand total of 196,000 copies. In the course of 1816, the Committee have completed,

Slavonian Bibles 10,000 *Finnish* Bibles 5,000

do. N. Testament 10,000 *French* Bibles 5,000

and *Samogitian* New Testament 5,000

And, at present, the printing of the following editions, is either continued, or has been begun in 1817 :

<i>Slavonian</i> Bibles	20,000	<i>Georgian</i>	N. Test.	2,000
do. N. Test.	5,000	<i>Moldavian</i>	Bibles	5,000
<i>Armenian</i> Bibles	5,000	do.	N. Test.	5,000
do. N. Test.	3,000	<i>German Catholic</i>	do.	5,000
<i>Greek</i> Bibles	3,000	<i>Lettonian</i>	N. Test.	5,000
do. N. Test.	5,000	<i>Dorpatian Esthonian</i>	do.	5,000

Tartar New-Testament 2,000 ; Gospel of St. Luke (extra copies) 2,000 ; Psalms, 2,000 ; and *Calmuc* Gospel, 2,000.

The number of Bibles and Testaments issued in the course of the year, amounts to 19,431 copies, which is only about 500 copies fewer than were issued the three former years put together. The expenditures are nearly in the same proportion. During the three years, 1813, 1814, and 1815, the expenditure amounted to 297,642 rubles, 47 copecs ; in 1816, alone, 227,770 rubles, 73 copecs.

Besides the above, preparations are making for stereotype editions of the Scriptures, in five different languages : they are in a course of translation into the *Common Russian*, *Tartar* and *Carelian* languages ; and measures are adopting for procuring translations into *Turkish Armenian* and *Burat Mongolian*.*

When the Report was finished, His Excellency, Mr. Turge-neff, gave an account of the progress and success of the Bible Societies in other parts of the world, and expatiated particularly on the gigantic operations of the British and Foreign Bible Society. When the assembly was informed that you had expended, during the 12 years of the existence of your Society, nearly *eleven millions* of rubles, they were perfectly struck with astonishment. Let us unite our notes of praise, and bless the Lord together ; for it is his doing, and is wonderful in our eyes."



EXTRACT OF A LETTER FROM MR. CARVER TO THE METHODIST
MISSIONARY COMMITTEE IN LONDON, DATED

Jaffaapatam, March 17, 1817.

REV. AND VERY DEAR FATHERS,

Thankful to God for his unnumbered mercies, I embrace the pleasing duty of addressing you. In compliance with your request, I cheerfully endeavour to make you acquainted with our

* Mr. Henderson adds, in a Poscript, that application has lately been made by the Missionaries at Astrachan for copies of the Sanscript Scriptures (printed at Serampore) for the use of Brahmins, and other Indians, resident in that city, who, on examining certain specimens, desired to be furnished with copies. A letter, written in Hebrew, and signed by six Rabbies, has also been received, requesting Hebrew Bibles for about nine hundred Jewish families resident in the Kumak Country, on the western shore of the Caspian. "Here," observes Mr. Henderson, "is a fresh opening for the Hebrew New-Testament now printing in London"

work on this station. We entered upon our labours with the advantage of brother Lynch's experience, which to me, especially, was highly beneficial. The school had suffered some diminution by our worthy brother's absence at Colombo, and had in it, on my arrival, twenty-seven or thirty scholars; one third of which were native Malabars; the rest descendants of Dutch and Portuguese parents. Some of the Malabars speak, read, and write English, and evince good desires to learn more of the Scriptures, which by the blessing of God, are able to make them wise unto salvation.

We began to put the school on a better footing, and were determined by the grace of God, to bend much of our attention towards the rising generation, conscious that on them hang the events of advancing years. We also commenced the study of the Malabar language, and went on with some success; brother Squance preaching in Portuguese, and I took my turn in English.

Shortly after our arrival here, I had an attack of fever, which confined me to my room upwards of a month. Brother Squance also had a very severe attack of his old complaint. Very providentially brother Lynch was at Point Pedro, and came to our assistance. By remaining at Point Pedro about a week, through mercy, I was perfectly restored; but brother Squance's indisposition continued with increasing rapidity, and began to threaten us with the loss of our dear and valuable brother.

The doctor ordered his removal from Jaffna, and recommended the air of Colombo. But as our dear brother wished, if possible, not to be forced to quit his post, he was recommended to Point Pedro, where he now remains.

Previous to his going to Point Pedro, we had resolved to establish a school there for native children; and succeeded in procuring a piece of land on the sea-beach, (the only place where we could have any,) on a lease for twenty one years, for the trifling consideration of six fanams (about nine-pence) rent, per year. Indeed, the people wished to give it to us free, and we proposed the rent to make the contract legal. A slight building for a temporary residence, and to enjoy the benefit of the sea air, was resolved upon; which, when nearly finished, brother Squance took possession of. A school for Tamul and English was commenced on the 12th of February, and about twelve boys have been admitted to learn English. Since brother Squance removed to Point Pedro, he is much recovered.

In this Province are a number of Churches built by the Portuguese, and consequently spacious and adapted to the Roman Catholic mode of worship. In the time of the Dutch, many of them were used as Protestant churches; but now they are in a state of dilapidation and ruin. It was thought advisable to endeavour to raise up schools at these places, to teach the children, and those more advanced in life, the principles of Christianity; visiting the people in the villages as often as possible. Accordingly, a petition was sent to his Excellency, praying for the use of these places for the purposes mentioned; to which we received an encouraging and satisfactory reply from his excellency, who has on this, and every other occasion, evinced the greatest readiness to forward every measure which has for its object the amelioration of the condition of the heathen.

Information was given us that any of the old churches were at our service on a lease of seven years, rent free. As we had established ourselves at Point Pedro, which is distant from Jaffnapatam about twenty one miles, it became very desirable to have the church of Puttoor, nearly midway between the two places, because in this climate it is highly injurious to health either to be exposed to the chilly dews of the night, or the insufferable heat of the sun by day. On the road to Point Pedro, there has been six churches: at Nallour, Copay, Puttoor, Atchavelly, Uddepetty, and Kattavelly, mostly distant from each other three, four, and five miles. Nallour and Copay have little remaining except the foundations, which mark the place where once they stood—At Puttoor and Atchavelly we are fitting up schools. Some of these are very extensive buildings, from one hundred to one hundred and forty feet long, and forty or fifty broad, some built of brick, others coral rock.

Since my arrival, it has fallen to my lot to visit the country villages a little more than my two colleagues have had an opportunity of doing. They are called villages, but differ widely from any thing of that kind in England, being so scattered that we seldom find many houses near each other, and in general the cots or houses are poor, frail, and temporary dwellings, convincing us at the first sight of the poverty of their possessors. Every kind of furniture is dispensed with, and they sleep promiscuously on the hard clod, unconscious of the checks of shame, or the comforts of domestic economy and social happiness. To

give a general view of this part of the island, it may not be uninteresting to remark that the country from Trincomalee northward, is one vast flat or sheet of land, stretching toward the continent till it reaches the straits which divide the island from the Peninsula; and appears very little above the elevation of the sea. This tract of land is in general coral rock, covered with a thin strata of earth; and has been more or less cultivated, according to the fluctuating circumstances which have occurred among those who have at different times had possession of the island.

In the time of the Portuguese and Dutch, large tracts of land were cultivated, which are now abandoned and laid waste.—Spacious tanks, once filled with water, are now become the scite of villages; and much of that part of the country, stretching from Trincomalee in a direct line across the island, is given up to the undisturbed possession of wild elephants and beasts of prey.

The district of Jaffnapatam is one of the richest on the island. Its staple article is tobacco; rice is also raised to considerable advantage; but not many tropical fruits in abundance, except plantains. In the villages the people live by cultivation, and the mode of leaving the inheritance divided among the children has subdivided their paddy fields and gardens into an almost inconceivable number of small portions. Sometimes many persons are joint proprietors of a small field or a few fruit trees; when the fruits are gathered or fall from the tree, frequent disputes arise among them, and perpetual litigation is the consequence. On some occasions, and, alas! they are very common, the passions, unaccustomed to restraint, take fire, and they are hurried away by violent rage to commit acts of the most awful desperation; fighting with their knives, cutting and maiming each other in the most shocking manner. On these occasions, all sense of relation and of obligation is lost. Very lately I beheld a man streaming with blood from the gashes he had just received in one of these disputes; when the perpetrator of this horrid work was brought before the magistrate it proved to be the man's father-in-law.

To persons unaccustomed to scenes like these, the tender feelings receive an involuntary shock; but among a people where God is not known they appear to view them with stupid indifference. The standard of morals is sunk very low, and the

comforts and conveniences of life little cultivated among them. Indeed, the obligation to do right, and to speak the truth, is by some partially acknowledged, while others absolutely deny it; and the very gravely assure you, that lying is necessary in this life, and impossible to be avoided. As far as I have been able to know any thing of their religion, confusion rests upon it. Many appear insensible to any obligations to a superior Being, further than paying a kind of fearful homage to those whom they think capable or inclined to do them some bodily injury. Thousands are reduced to a regular system of Gentooism, which enjoins certain offerings and duties. The Brahmin priesthood is adapted to the poverty of the people, subsisting chiefly on the daily offerings of fruits and milk, which are brought by the people to the temple. Prejudices, handed down from father to son, form a very formidable barrier to their obtaining knowledge; and that indolence which attaches itself to an unoccupied mind, sinks them into a kind of stupor, from which nothing less than the powerful voice of God can ever awaken them. When questioned concerning their religious views, they generally give you a confused account, at the same time making large pretensions to the antiquity of their Shasters. When desired to give some account and proof of their knowledge of their own or any other language which they profess to know, some flimsy evasion is made to avoid it. When appeals are made to their common sense, on the folly and unreasonableness of certain ceremonies, the only answer that can be obtained is—"Their fathers did so; it is a custom, therefore we do it!" So ridiculous are some of these customs that very lately I came up with a number of these votaries conducting their god into the country on a wooden horse, and on inquiry was informed it was customary for their god once a year to go into the country a shooting!!! I think nothing less than seeing the procession, and hearing the alternate firing of the guns, could have made me give credit to such an absurdity.—My blood ran chill within me, and lifting up my soul in prayer to God, cried in the anguish of my spirit "Deliver these captives from the power of Satan; enlighten their minds that they may see the vanity of idols. And, O Lord, speedily give thy Son the heathen for an inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for his possession."

On visiting the old and ruined churches my mind has sometimes indulged in a train of reflections. So many years ago the

first agitators of these plans and buildings visited these lonely and retired spots. Then there was no place to screen them from the sickening rays of a burning sun, no inviting natives to cheer them with an hospitable reception. Armed with power and conveying but half the gospel, they planted Roman Catholicism; built immense structures, whose perishing ruins convey a sufficient idea of their fatal power. Instead of conveying clear views of the holy gospel, they engaged themselves in senseless ceremonies; and for the simple worship of the "blessed God," introduced a system differing so little from the worship of Moloch that the overawed heathen readily accepted a religion so much like his own. But the long succession of priests, where are they? The people that attended, either willingly or unwillingly, have they ceased to live? Alas, death has destroyed them all—God has taken away their name and place—the place that once knew them, knows them no more for ever. The succession of ministers appointed by the Dutch authority—all—all have disappeared and left the churches in possession of owls and of serpents.

Thus, dear fathers, and brethren, have we been favoured with an open door to the heathen of this place. O that God would open our lips, and inspire our tongues to plead with them in their own language! but this is a barrier not easily surmounted.—May the Lord give us courage to persevere, till we finally obtain power to speak with convincing demonstration, and with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven! My personal experience in the things belonging to my peace, and the work of God in my own soul, have increased since I left my native land. God is precious to my soul daily; and were it not for the cheering consolations of his blessed Spirit, this would be a dreary land indeed.

Since I began to write this letter the stations have come to hand. On reading many names dear to me, my heart began to expand, the gushing tear refused to be repressed. I kneeled down and prayed and wept for the prosperity of Zion. May the work of the Lord not only proceed by thousands and tens of thousands, but by millions and tens of millions; yea, till "all shall feel he died for them." We, alas! bear but a small part in the great controversy with the powers of darkness, and may be compared to stragling pioneers, endeavouring to sap the founda-

tions of the adversary, among a people of a strange tongue. We need your prayers; and the assurance that thousands are pleading for us in our dear, our happy country, is sometimes like a solid rock on which our minds repose. My paper is done long before I have written what I intended. One thing I must add, which will be gratifying to the feelings of our highly esteemed brother, Mr. Thos. Wood. Having brought, among my other little elementary books, some copies of his excellent catechism, copies were forwarded from Galle to Colombo, and have been translated into Cingalese. We have succeeded in procuring a translation of it in Tamul, which is intended for the press, and will be of the most essential service here. No doubt our brethren will have mentioned in their letters that they have printed it also in Portuguese, and one edition likewise in English, which I find to be very useful in the schools. We feel very thankful indeed that we had copies with us; such books are much wanted.

Brother M'Kenny has been indisposed, but is recovered.— Brother Squance's health, he writes me, is improving. Brother Lynch is at Madras on a visit to inspect the state of the society there. The rest of the brethren, I believe, are well.

Now may the God of all grace bless our dear friends in England, fill us all with fervent zeal in his blessed cause, bring our brethren to our help in safety, and at last crown us with immortality and eternal life, is the prayer of, dear fathers,

Your affectionate son,

In the Gospel of Jesus Christ,

R. CARVER.

OBITUARY.

ACCOUNT OF THE DEATH OF THE REV. DR. COKE.

ALTHOUGH several notices of the death of this great and good man have already been published, as we have seen no account so circumstantial as the following Extract from his Life, written by Mr. S. Drew, we think it will be satisfactory to the numerous friends of the Doctor to have it inserted in this Miscellany.

“On the 24th of April 1814, the ships in which the Missionaries had taken passage for Ceylon, passed the Isle of France. And on the 27th, they were within five miles of the little isle of Gallega, yet no soundings could be found with a line of fifty fathoms.

But they were now brought to the margin of an event, which was of too

much magnitude, and was too deeply interesting to all the missionaries, to allow them time to make observations on any thing besides. This event was nothing less than the sudden and unexpected death of Dr. Coke. Cheerful, and animated with the mission which now was full in prospect before him, he had enjoyed a good share of health during all the former part of their voyage. And instead of having any presentiment of his death, he was ready, on most occasions, to comfort those whose spirits sunk under the violence of continued storms. Even to the last day of his life his exertions in his study were unremitted, to prepare himself for those missionary labours, on which he had already entered, and of which he beheld the happy effects by a pleasing anticipation. But his work was done; and his days were brought to an end, like a tale that is told.

On the 1st of May, he just hinted that he found himself somewhat indisposed, but his complaint was of so trifling a nature, that neither himself nor his companions viewed it in any serious light. On the 2d of May he continued much the same; his indisposition was not wholly removed, but he did not perceive it to increase. He conversed as usual, and walked the deck at his accustomed hour. In the evening, as he was about to retire to rest, he requested Mr. Clough to give him from their chest a little opening medicine. With this request Mr. Clough instantly complied, offering at the same time to sit up with him during the night.— But this offer was refused by Dr. Coke, who did not think himself so much indisposed as to render such attention necessary. He therefore, on retiring to rest, took his fellow missionaries by the hand, and, in his usual manner, commended them to God. This was the last time his voice was ever heard.

To improve his moments to the utmost, it had been his constant practice while on board, to rise every morning

at half-past five; and to prevent him from sleeping beyond his accustomed time, the servant, who attended him, had received orders to call him from his bed at the appointed hour. On the morning of the 3d of May, the servant knocked, as usual, at his cabin door.— But after several efforts, being unable to procure any reply, he ventured to open the door. This being done, he discovered, to his utter astonishment, the mortal remains of Dr. Coke, lifeless, cold, and nearly stiff, stretched upon the cabin floor.

The servant, on making this discovery, hastened to the apartment of Captain Birch, making him first acquainted with the melancholy tidings. Captain Birch, on hearing of the event, immediately sent for Mr. Clough, and communicated to him the awful information. Mr. Clough instantly hastened to Mr. Harvard, and imparted to him the tale of woe. Both then proceeded to the cabin of Dr. Coke, and saw that the catastrophe, which they would gladly have disbelieved, was mournfully true.

The corpse by this time had been taken from the floor, and laid on the bed; but from the placidity which rested on the countenance, it did not seem to have been agitated by any convulsive throes. The head appeared to be a little turned towards one shoulder; but, with this exception, no distortion whatever was visible. As soon as the agitation, which the sudden shock had occasioned, had a little subsided, they requested the surgeon of the ship to examine the body. With this request he readily complied; and the result of his examination was, the probability that his death was occasioned by a fit of apoplexy, to which, from the make of his body, and the nature of his constitution, he appeared to have been somewhat predisposed. But of this fact no satisfactory evidence can be either expected or obtained, as he died suddenly and alone.

It was supposed by those on board, repaired on board, to mingle their tears that he must have risen from his bed, with those who were already weeping either to procure something that was there. Their first meeting was rather not within his reach, or to call assistance, as he found his indisposition to increase; but that the stroke coming suddenly on him with irresistible violence, he fell immediately on the floor, and instantly expired in that position in which he was found by the servant. It is furthermore presumed, that his death must have happened about midnight. If it had been much earlier his fall must have been heard by some in the adjoining cabins, who had not retired long to rest; and if it had been later, his body could not have been stiff and cold. Divided from his cabin only by a thin wainscot partition were the cabins of Captain Birch and Mr. Harvard; but as neither of these heard the least noise from his apartment, it is fairly to be presumed, that he expired without a struggle or a groan.

As the *Lady Melville* was at no great distance, and the weather was serene, Captain Birch kindly offered to Messrs. Harvard and Clough a boat, to transmit the melancholy tidings to the missionaries on board that ship.—A note was accordingly written by Mr. Harvard to the brethren on board, and another from Captain Birch to Captain Lochner, stating the awful fact, and requesting the missionaries to hasten to the *Cabalva*, and join in the mournful consultation. On receiving their note, the missionaries gazed on each other in speechless amazement, scarcely presuming to credit the intelligence which its lines had imparted, or to believe the evidence of their eyes. They were, however, soon roused from this natural delirium, by the surgeon of the *Lady Melville*, who entered their cabin with the note of Captain Birch to Captain Lochner in his hand, announcing to them with unquestionable certainty, that Dr. Coke was actually dead.

Expiring hope being now deprived of every subterfuge, the mournful band

each other no language can fully express. Their own situation was now rendered truly forlorn; but the tide of sorrow, on which they were borne by their present calamity, swallowed up every other consideration, thus leaving to them no room for reflections on their private concerns.

When the first transports of their grief had somewhat subsided, they held a consultation together, to contrive in what manner they might preserve the body; and, in compliance with Dr. Coke's will, restore it to England, that it might be interred at Brecon with his wives. But as nothing could be done without the concurrence of Captain Birch, they agreed to wait on him, and state the particular wish, which their deceased father in the Lord had frequently expressed. Messrs. Ault and Clough undertook this task, and on being introduced, communicated their message. To every thing they urged he paid the most scrupulous attention, and expressed his earnest desires to comply with their wishes, so far as prudence and propriety would admit. But on the present occasion, he thought the difficulties against preserving the body to be so numerous, and so formidable, that their request amounted to little less than a moral impossibility.

Being disappointed in their hopes, in the same proportion that they were convinced by his arguments, Messrs. Ault and Clough then withdrew, to communicate to their associates in sorrow the observations which Captain Birch had made. A consultation was immediately held; and, after deliberately weighing all that had been, and might be urged, on both sides, they finally concluded, that it would be prudent to submit to the Captain's opinion, and suffer the body of Dr. Coke to be committed to the deep.

On communicating this reluctant acquiescence to the Captain, he seemed highly pleased with their determination, and requested them to pursue any plan they might think proper in celebrating his funeral solemnities. But as this was a point on which they had not deliberated, it became necessary for them again to withdraw, to hold another consultation. Their ship was now within about two degrees of the equator, and the intenseness of the heat rendered it improper for them to preserve the body, which would soon become putrid in a cabin, contiguous to which several passengers must sleep. It was therefore resolved, that his obsequies should take place on the evening of the same day.

Before they had communicated this intention to the Captain, he sent them a polite note, requesting to know how they meant to proceed; and at the same time expressed his desire "to shew every token of respect to the memory of so worthy and excellent a man." He was soon made acquainted with their determination; and approving of the measures they intended to pursue, every thing was got ready with all prudent expedition, to the entire satisfaction of all the officers and passengers on board. The funeral rites were conducted in the following manner.

The carpenters employed made a large, thick, deal coffin, leaving as usual on such occasions, holes in the bottom, that the air being expressed by the entrance of the water, might not prevent the body from sinking. In this coffin the body was decently laid; and, to accelerate its descent, four cannon balls, tied up in four bags, were introduced, two at the head and two at the feet of the corpse. The cover being nailed down, the coffin was brought upon deck a little before five o'clock, and laid on the leeward gangway, on the starboard side, where it remained for some time, covered over with signal flags. The awning being spread, the soldiers were drawn up in rank on

deck, when the tolling of the ship's bell called together the passengers and crew, so that the deck was quite crowded with solemn and silent spectators, who seemed much affected with the scene of mortality they were then called to witness. Mr. Harvard then read the burial service, and the body was consigned to its watery grave in silent solemnity, to be seen no more, till "the trumpet shall sound and the dead shall be raised incorruptible."

The funeral service being concluded, Mr. Ault, before the people retired, delivered an address on the affecting occasion of their assembling together. In this address he adverted to the character, zeal, perseverance, respectability, activity, and public usefulness of the deceased, and lamented the loss which the present mission had sustained, by being for ever deprived of his talents and counsels. From the sudden and unexpected stroke which had launched into eternity one of their companions, who but yesterday had walked the deck from which he had now been plunged into the ocean, and was at this moment descending into caverns which no plummet had ever reached, he took occasion to remind them of the uncertainty of human life, and to enforce the necessity of being prepared for an unexpected summons. Having finished his address, Mr. Lynch read a funeral hymn, from the 53d page of Mr. Wesley's collection, beginning with these words,— "Hark a voice divides the sky,—Happy are the faithful dead." He then concluded with a solemn prayer, that God would render this melancholy visitation a blessing to every soul. The whole service was awfully interesting and deeply impressive. Several were visibly affected; and all conducted themselves with the utmost propriety. But to render serious impressions lasting must be the work of God.

This solemn event took place on the 3d of May, 1814, in latitude 2 deg. 29 min. south, and in longitude 59 deg. 29 min. east from London."

POETRY.

ON NEW YEAR'S DAY.

GREAT GOD! to Thee what gratitude I
owe!

The source of ALL that I enjoy below;
Past blessings not thy gracious care suf-
fice,

New mercies still with each new mo-
ment rise;

Nor this the least, for which my thanks
I pay,

'To live to see another New-Year's-day!
With the old year, may the old man be
gone,

And, with the new, may I the new put
on!

Oh! to supply new time, new grace,
be thine!

New heart, new spirit, and new life be
mine.

THE CHRISTIAN SOLDIER'S DEATH.

*To the Memory of the late Rev. THO-
MAS TAYLOR.—By Mr. Montgomery.*

SERVANT of GOD! well done,
Rest from thy lov'd employ;
The battle's fought, the vict'ry won,
Enter thy Master's joy;
—The voice at midnight came,
He started up to hear;
A mortal arrow pierc'd his frame,
He fell—but felt no fear.

At home amidst alarms,
It found him in the field;
A veteran slumb'ring on his arms,
Beneath his red-cross shield;
His sword was in his hand,
Still warm with recent fight;
Ready that moment at command
Through rock and steel to smite.

It was a two edg'd blade,
Of heav'nly temper keen;
And double were the wounds it made
Where'er it glanc'd between;
'Twas death to sin—'twas life
To all that mourn'd their sin:
It kindl'd and it silenc'd strife,
Made war and peace within.
Stout hearts before it fell,
Subdu'd by wrath and love;

'Twas dreadful as the flames of hell,
Bright as the beams above:
Heroes were wont to name
The weapons of their might;
This was a brand of matchless fame,
—The WORD of GOD, in fight.

Oft with its fi'ry force
His arm had quell'd the foe:
And laid, resistless in his course,
The alien armies low;
Bent on such glorious toils,
The world to him was loss;
But all his trophies, all his spoils,
He hung upon the cross.

At midnight came the cry,
"—To meet thy GOD prepare,"
He 'woke—he caught his Captain's eye,
Then strong in faith and prayer;
His spirit with a bound
Burst its incumb'ring clay;
—His tent at sun-rise on the ground
A darken'd ruin lay.

The pains of death are past,
Labour and sorrow cease;
And life's long warfare clos'd at last,
His soul is found in peace.
—Soldier of Christ well done!
Begin thy new employ;
Sing, while eternal ages run,
Thy Master and his joy.

J. MONTGOMERY.

Sheffield, Nov. 27th, 1816.

EPITAPH ON A FRIEND.

TREAD softly o'er this hallow'd ground,
Pale Sorrow's child lies here;
Ye who have felt misfortune's frown's
Here pause, and drop a tear:

And ye, who nought but pleasures
court,
And bask in Fortune's ray,
Here, learn how vain are earthly joys,
How soon they fade away.

Here sleeps in peace, who often felt
Compassion's kindly flame;
Oft dropt a tear at Pity's shrine,—
A shade without a name.